



BILL RICHARDSON
GOVERNOR

State of New Mexico
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
Office of the Secretary
Harold Runnels Building
1190 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-6110
Telephone (505) 827-2855
Fax (505) 827-2836



RON CURRY
SECRETARY

DERRITH WATCHMAN-MOORE
DEPUTY SECRETARY

January 26, 2005
Immediate Release

Contact: Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Dir.
Phone: (505) 827-0314

Environment Department Settles Solid Waste Violations Arising From Camino Real Landfill Inspections

(Santa Fe, NM) — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has entered into a settlement agreement with El Paso Disposal to resolve six alleged solid waste violations uncovered during inspections of the Camino Real landfill in Sunland Park, New Mexico. These inspections were conducted in August, 2004 by NMED enforcement staff at the direction of Governor Bill Richardson. These inspections followed an anonymous tip of illegal disposal at the Sunland Park landfill, the largest in New Mexico. Enforcement efforts included thorough inspections of each truckload of waste entering the landfill by teams of NMED inspectors.

The six alleged violations included unauthorized transport of special waste, attempted disposal of unauthorized special waste, improper transport of asbestos waste, transport of special waste without a contingency plan, transport of special waste without a manifest, and failure to provide documentation of analytical and generator knowledge of special waste. The August inspections uncovered several truckloads containing such "special wastes" as infectious garbage including hypodermic needles from hospital, dairy, veterinary or medical operations and asbestos.

"I believe that this inspection and enforcement effort sent a strong message that we will not allow New Mexico to become a dumping ground for illegal waste," said NMED Secretary Ron Curry. "Infectious waste can pose grave health hazards, especially to waste haulers and landfill workers. This settlement will insure that waste haulers are better educated about these serious issues."

Illegal disposal of medical waste can lead to an increased risk of exposure to many blood-borne illnesses including hepatitis B and AIDS.

Under the agreement El Paso Disposal will pay a total civil penalty of \$11,500. El Paso Disposal is required to pay this amount to the State of New Mexico within 30 days. These monies will go to the New Mexico Solid Waste Facility Grant Fund where they will be used to assist local governments and solid waste authorities with construction and operation of solid waste facilities.

The settlement agreement also stipulates that El Paso Disposal must complete two supplemental environmental projects. One is valued at \$71,600 and will include researching infectious waste disposal

more

El Paso Disposal PR

1/26/05

Page 2

practices in New Mexico and West Texas and developing a curriculum for a training course that describes necessary steps for generator compliance. This curriculum will include video and photographic materials that illustrate both improper and proper handling of infectious waste. El Paso Disposal must also schedule four presentations of the training course in New Mexico and videotape the presentations for preparation of an online training course.

The second will be to provide free waste disposal pick up of at least 840 yards of waste at clean up projects in New Mexico. This project must be completed within 18 months and is valued at \$11,500.

For further information contact Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

###